

SECRET

20 MAR 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

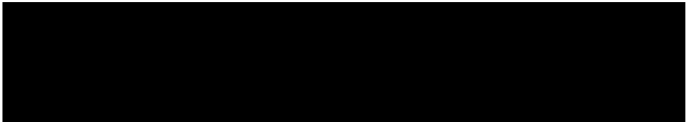
SUBJECT: Release of American Prisoners

1. Briefed William Darden, Senate Armed Services Committee staff, that Mr. James Donovan was in Havana negotiating for the release of American prisoners. It was indicated that this negotiation had, in fact, been begun during the negotiations for the release of the Cuban brigade in the sense that the question had been raised and left on the ground that if the release of the brigade could be worked out, it might be equally possible to work out the release of the Americans. Mr. Darden was advised that the present exchange will probably be conditioned on the release of the three Cubans recently arrested in New York City on charges relating to espionage and sabotage and a fourth, Francisco Molina del Rio, who is imprisoned in the State of New York for the killing of a South American girl on the streets of New York City during a shooting spree. It was noted that New York authorities have been most cooperative and reasonably can be expected to cooperate in this matter.

2. The question was raised whether Mr. Darden would be able to transmit this information to the Senator before the weekend. Darden indicated that the Senator is out of town and he would not be contacting him on this matter; that it was not the type of thing which he felt should be specially transmitted by their office.

3. After the close of the above meeting, the Legislative Counsel was advised that in all probability the Armed Services Committee staff representatives would not be contacting Senator Russell to advise him of the potential release of American prisoners over the weekend.

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Assistant Legislative Counsel

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